Sutton

ORVILLE WRIGHT
DAYTON, OHIO

May 28, 1925.

Mr. George F. Kunz, President,
Museums of the Peaceful Arts,
405 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Kunz:

The announcement of my intention to send our first airplane to the Kensington Museum brought upon me an avalanche of letters. I am simply swamped with them, so please pardon this delay in answering yours.

No one can regret more than I the situation in the Smithsonian Institution which has made it impossible for me to place our first airplane in its care. I have wanted the plane to go to a museum which has an historical and educational exhibit of aeronautics, and not to a museum where it would be merely a prominent curiosity. The Smithsonian is the only institution in America which now has such an exhibit. But the Smithsonian has not cared to exhibit our plane of 1903, which was the first to fly, because it would overshadow the 1903 Langley machine, which failed to fly.

When the Smithsonian in 1910 made a request for one of our machines, we suggested that we could furnish the original 1903 plane. We received in answer a request for our 1908 machine and a quarter-size model of the 1908 machine. The National Museum now has one of our 1909 planes.

I have kept our 1903 machine in my possession in the hope that conditions in the Smithsonian might change. But after waiting nearly fifteen years, and seeing the situation there becoming worse instead of better, I finally offered it to the South Kensington Museum. At the time I offered it I had not heard of the proposed Museums of the Peaceful Arts.

Very truly yours,

Orville Wright

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